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# BULLETIN

## OF THE

# AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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There is no subscription price and the Bulletin is sent only to members of the Association.

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### AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

President—William W. Bishop, University of Michigan Library, Ann Arbor.

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### SHALL A PERMANENT ENDOWMENT BE UNDERTAKEN FOR PEACE TIME WORK OF THE A. L. A.?

An open meeting of the Council of the American Library Association has been called for Tuesday afternoon, June 24, at Asbury Park, to discuss the advisability of attempting to raise a permanent endowment for peace time work of the Association, the need for it and the possible ways and means of obtaining it.

The following communication has recently been sent to members of the Council by the secretary of the Association:

Does not every member of the American Library Association strongly feel that we must "carry on" into our peace time organization and readjustment what we have gained during the war and the work which

the Association has been conducting during the war?

Does not every librarian realize that the opportunities in the coming days of peace, though perhaps less dramatic, are fully as important as our work in the war, and perhaps even more important and far-reaching?

Do we not all feel that it is unthinkable for the Association to throw aside these great opportunities for usefulness and go back to its before-the-war status?

The problem facing us all is not: What is there to do? It is: What means have we with which to do it? With these problems before us and with this question, the most important one for us at the present time to answer, should not the Council of the Association, as a body to which matters of policy are referred, carefully consider at the Asbury Park Conference the work which the Association ought to do and whether ways and means can be devised for raising an endowment fund adequate to prosecute these activities?

The president and secretary have recently discussed this situation considerably in detail and have reached the conclusion that these matters should be laid before the Council. An open meeting of that body will be held at Asbury Park on Tuesday afternoon, June 24. It is planned to devote the entire session to this one subject, namely: A permanent endowment for peace time work of the A. L. A., the need for it, and a discussion of ways and means. Two or three members will be asked to set forth the need for taking advantage of our war time opportunities. Several members will be asked to speak briefly of definite lines of activity that the A. L. A. needs money for, such for example as the following:

- (a) Greater publicity—Co-operative publicity—Employment of a publicity expert.
- (b) Libraries for industrial plants, prisons, hospitals; books for the merchant marine, coast guards, light-house keepers, etc.
- (c) Organizing libraries and doing other Association work in states lacking library commissions.
- (d) An adequate library survey—What it would accomplish—What it involves—What it will cost.
- (e) Extending library privileges to rural communities.

A member will be asked to speak briefly (5 minutes) on each of these five heads. This list could easily be expanded to twice this length but it is unnecessary. The above examples are illustrative of the kind

of work the A. L. A. as a "going concern" ought to do and can do if it can find the means.

The next and most important question of all which the members will be asked to consider is: Can an adequate endowment be raised? If so, how? Two or three members will be asked in advance to be prepared to give their opinion and then the meeting will be thrown open to all interested members of the Association whether they are members of the Council or not.

This preliminary memorandum is being sent to the members of the Council and to a few other members of the Association for their opinion and advice. The president and the secretary will appreciate hearing from you, and as promptly as possible, because we want to give pre-conference publicity to this program so that all members of the Association will come to Asbury Park knowing that this matter is to be discussed and ready to express his or her opinion.

There may be a divergence of opinion as to whether it is best to attempt to raise an endowment fund, but there certainly is no question but that all members of the Association are agreed that the war has opened remarkable opportunities for usefulness and that steps in some way should be taken to carry on the work the Association ought to do. We hope there will be a frank and full discussion of all phases of this important subject, so that if there is a committee appointed to represent the Association and carry out plans which the Council recommends, the members of it may have a very clear view of the attitude of the membership of the Association toward the project.

#### AN A. L. A. BOOK SERVICE

The war service of the American Library Association will soon be brought to an end. The Association, however, will not be at all content to reduce its activities to the ante-bellum scale. If any promising field of service as extensive and taxing as the Library War Service could be found and cultivated, there are many workers who would welcome the task.

A number of persons familiar with the administration of the war service have on different occasions suggested the estab-

lishment of a central book agency for the benefit of American libraries. Among them Mr. Compton and Mr. Vail have proposed, in the February and March numbers of the *Library Journal*, that a national book purchasing headquarters be organized, somewhat similar to the entirely successful book department of the Library War Service.

This is a matter which the Asbury Park Conference will do well to consider. The potentialities of such a project are very great. What a book headquarters might become, presently or eventually, is indicated below, in the form of a prospectus.

**Name.** A. L. A. Book Service.

**Place.** New York.

#### Purposes.

(1) To relieve libraries, by a central organization, of part of the expense of money and time connected with book buying and the preparation of books for use.

(2) To assist libraries in book selection and in the extension of the use of books.

#### Activities.

The A. L. A. Book Service: (1) Will buy for libraries books in print and out of print, new and second-hand, in all languages, from publishers and dealers both domestic and foreign, and will secure for libraries the largest possible discounts.

(2) Will classify and catalog books so bought and will prepare them for the shelves of the patronizing library, provided, and so far as, the details of all this work can be adjusted to suit the library's requirements.

(3) Will classify and catalog books sent to its offices which are in out-of-the-way languages or otherwise difficult to treat.

(4) Will provide durable bindings as requested at the smallest possible expense, and in general will undertake binding, re-binding, and fine binding for libraries.

(5) Will evaluate new books and recommend them for different types of libraries, for this purpose taking over and modifying the *Booklist* of the A. L. A.

(6) Will give to individual libraries upon request expert assistance in book selection: e. g., among technical books.

(7) Will prepare and print timely book lists and bibliographies, and will print or reprint useful lists prepared elsewhere.

(8) Will form reference collections in its office of the best books on subjects of special importance, of good editions of standard authors, of children's books, and of bibliographies of all kinds.